

OSHA Regional News Release

**U.S. Department of Labor
Office of Public Affairs**

Region 6

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OSHA PROPOSES \$140,000 PENALTY AGAINST EXIDE CORP.'S SCHUYLKILL METALS IN BATON ROUGE

The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has cited Exide Corp.'s Schuylkill Metals in Baton Rouge, La., for alleged safety and health violations with proposed penalties of \$140,000, announced the U.S. Department of Labor.

The Schuylkill plant recycles batteries and employs about 200 workers. The investigation began in June when an employee was trapped and killed while attempting to unclog a furnace.

"Old batteries are placed into a large furnace for melting," explained Baton Rouge Area Director Robert D. Holmes. "At times there are so many batteries in the furnace that it jams. To unclog the furnace a worker placed himself halfway into the machine, it recycled and he was killed."

The OSHA investigation found the employer had no specific procedures developed or implemented for lock-out of the furnace's ram function during the unclogging. Additionally, there was no energy isolating device placed into the system to prevent the ram from recycling while being unclogged.

The company was cited for two willful violations. A willful violation is defined as an intentional disregard of or plain indifference to the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Act. Each willful violation was assessed a penalty of \$70,000.

The company has 15 working days from receipt of the citations to comply or to contest them before the independent Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission.

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